UNITED STATES TO PROVIDE TAKA 1,373 CRORE TO CONTINUE HEALTH, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMS IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA, OCTOBER 4 -- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) signed formal agreements to continue joint development activities in the health, economic growth and environment sectors. Under the new agreements, USAID will provide a total of taka 1373 crore in the aforesaid sectors.

USAID will provide approximately taka 1194 crore (US$173 million) over five years to fund programs supporting maternal and child health, family planning, tuberculosis eradication and HIV/AIDS mitigation under the health and population agreement. This cements a long and productive relation between USAID and the Ministries of Finance and Health and Family Welfare.

USAID will also provide up to approximately taka 131 crore (US$19 million) over nine years to support programs that strengthen private sector productivity and the overall business enabling environment. Several ministries will be involved, with the Ministry of Commerce taking the lead.

Also, an additional funding of approximately taka 48 crore ($7 million) over five years in the environment sector will support natural resource conservation and biodiversity preservation programs in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and will be expanded to include wetlands and other vital habitats around the country.

USAID is the principal U.S. Government agency that provides development assistance in more than 100 countries around the world. From 1971 to 2006, USAID has provided over $5 billion to Bangladesh in development assistance, with over half of that amount in food aid. In 2007, USAID provided US$78 million in development assistance to Bangladesh.

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Note: *A Bangla translation of this article is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail:* DhakaPA@state.gov; *Website:* http:// *dhaka.usembassy.gov*